

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

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PASS OES/OA; DHEW PHS/OIA/NIH; AID

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TAGS: SPOP, IN

SUBJ: MORE ON COMPULSORY STERILIZATION

SUMMARY: IT HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE INDIAN PRESS FROM MADRAS AND CALCUTTA THAT MUSLIMS AND OTHER MINORITY COMMUNITIES ARE RESPONDING WELL TO THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM AND ARE ACCEPTING STERILIZATION EQUALLY AS WELL AS HINDUA IN PROPORTION TO THE POPULATION. THIS IS CONTRARY TO SOME OF THE RELIABLE REPORTS THAT HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION LATELY AND WHICH HAVE BEEN RELATED TO THE DEPARTMENT. THERE HAVE BEEN FURTHER REPORTS THAT THE UTTAR PRADESH AND ELHI ADMINISTRATIONS ARE CONTINUING AN EXTREMELY SEVERE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM OF STERILIZATION WHICH HAS INCREASED THE TENSION IN THESE AREAS. THIS PROBLEM WAS BROUGHT UP IN THE LOK SABHA YESTERDAY AND THE PM HAS STATED AGAIN THAT THE GOVERNMENT POLITY WAS NOT TO USE COMPULSORY STERILIZATION IN THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM.END SUMMARY.

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1. AMCONGEN MADRAS REPORTED THE FOLLOWING PRESS STORY ON FAMILY PLANNING BY THE GOVERNMENT TO TAMIL NADU. ACCORDING TO THE TAMIL NADU HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING SECRETARY ON AUGUST 31, THERE IS A POPULAR MISCONCEPTION THAT FAMILY PLANNING IS NOT BEING ACCEPTED BY MINORITY COMMUNITIES LIKE MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS, BUT THE PERCENTAGE OF ACCEPTORS FROM THESE COMMUNITIES IS IN PROPORTION TO THE POPULATION OF THESE COMMUNITIES AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION. RANDOM STUDIES ON LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF STERILIZATION SHOW THAT STERILIZED PERSONS ARE HEALTHY AND POTENT. TAMIL NADU PLANS TO ORGANIZE SEVERAL TEMPORARY MASS FAMILY PLANNING CAMPS WITH A TARGET OF 4,000 STERILIZATIONS PER CAMP. THE GOTN TARGET FOR STERILIZATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1977 IS 500,000, AN INCREASE OF 150 PERCENT OVER THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR. ALREADY 104,000 STERILIZATIONS HAVE BEEN PERFORMED THIS YEAR. THE GOTN HAS NO PLANS FOR COMPULSORY STERILIZATION AT THIS TIME.

THE GOTN HAS LAUNCHED A MOTIVATION CAMPAIGN, WHICH WILL RUN THROUGH SEPTEMBER 15, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A NATIONAL FAMILY WELFARE PLANNING FORTNIGHT. PROGRAMS DURING THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD WILL INCLUDE A POET'S SYMPOSIUM AND SEMINAR ON FAMILY PLANNING IN MADRAS ON SEPTEMBER 7 & 8, AN ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM FEATURING FILM ARTISTS ON SEPTEMBER 13, SPECIAL DAILY PROGRAMS FOR WORKERS, WOMEN, YOUTH AND TEACHERS, AND THE SCREENING OF FILMS ON FAMILY PLANNING IN THEATERS IN MADRAS CITY.

THE T.N. GOVERNOR ACCORDING TO ANOTHER REPORT IN THE HINDU OF SEPTEMBER 1, STATED THAT THE GOTN WILL SHORTLY ANNOUNCE A NUMBER OF INCENTIVES AND DISINCENTIVES TO ACHIEVE THE TARGET OF STERILIZATIONS SET FOR THE STATE.

2. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED IN THE PRESS FROM CALCUTTA THAT THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN WEST BENGAL HAVE RESPONDED WELL TO THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM BY ATTAINING 17 0/0 OF THE TOTAL 1.14 MILLION VASECTOMY OPERATIONS PERFORMED IN THE STATE SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE PROGRAM. THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY MAKES UP 20.8 0/0 OF THE POPULATION. THE HINDUS IN WEST BENGAL CONSTITUTE 78.1 OF THE TOTAL 45 MILLION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POPULATION AND HAVE UNDERGONE 80.9 0/0 OF THE VASECTOMY OPERATIONS. SAMACHAR REPORTED RECENTLY THAT DWAN SYED ZAINAL ABEDIN ALI KHAN, THE SAJJADANASHIN OF AJMER, HAS SAID THAT MUSLIMS SHOULD ACCEPT FAMILY PLANNING AND THEIR RELIGIOUS LEADERS SHOULD STRIVE TO REMOVE THE MISUNDERSTANDING AND ELIMINATE DOUBTS SO THAT MUSLIMS COULD ACCEPT FAMILY PLANNING IN EARNEST. HE SAID THE HOLY QUARAN HAD

NOT PROHIBITED FAMILY PLANNING AND THAT THE MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS SHOULD SUPPORT FAMILY PLANNING.

3. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION FROM A CPI MP IN THE LOK SABHA YESTERDAY, THE PM SAID THE GOVERNMENT POLICY WAS NOT TO USE COMPULSORY STERILIZATION IN THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM. THE MP HAD MENTIONED THE "VICIOUS FAMILY PLANNING CAMPAIGN IN UTTAR PRADESH". MRS. GANDHI SAID IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT THERE WERE SO MANY RUMORS SPREAD ON THIS AND OTHER TOPICS. SHE INDICATED THAT FP WAS A STATE SUBJECT AND MAHARASTRA HAD PASSED THE FP LEGISLATIVE BILL. BUT IF ANY CASE OF HARASSMENT WAS BROUGHT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION IT WOULD BE LOOKED INTO. ONE OR TWO COMPLAINTS WERE BROUGHT TO HER ATTENTION AND INQUIRIES SHOWED THERE WAS NO TRUTH IN IT, SHE ADDED.

4. COMMENTS: WE CONTINUE TO HEAR STORIES, PARTICULARLY FOR UTTAR PRADSSH ON THE SEVERE STEPS BEING TAKEN TO MEET STERILIZATION GOALS AND IN FACT TO GO WAY BEYOND THE TARGETS SET BY THE CENTER. IT WAS REPORTED IN THE PRESS THAT 5 PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED IN LUCKNOW FOR CHARGES OF RUMOR MONGERING AND CREATING UNREST IN THE EDUCATIONS INSTITUTIONS CONCERNING THE STERILIZATION OF YOUNG BOYS AND GRILS.

5. WE HEARD A REPLABLE REPORT THAT IN BENARES THE BICYCKE RICHKSHAW WALLAS CLAIMED THAT THE LCOAL POLICE WERE PICKING UP AS MANY WALLAS AS THEY COULD FIND ON THE STREET AND FORCIBLY HERDING THEM TO STERILIZATION CLINICS. CONSEQUENTLY, NO ONE CAN FIND A RICKSHAW IN TOWN.

6. ANOTHER RELIABLE STORY COMES FROM A SMALL UP TOWN NEAR MEERAT ABOUT 60 MILES FROM DELHI. THIS IS PRIMARILY A MUSLIM TOWN THAT SELLS GRAIN TO BEER BREWERS IN DELHI. APPARENTLY ABOUT 50 MUSLIM GRAIN WORKERS WERE HEARDED INTO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STERILIZATION CLINICS IN MEERUT WITHOUT REGARD TO WHETHER THEY WERE EVEN MARRIED OR NOT. THIS ACTION HAS CAUSED EXTREME TENSION IN THE AREA AND SEVERAL RIOTS HAVE BROKEN OUT WITH POLICE.

7. IN DELHI THE LT. GOV., MR. KRISHAN CHAND IS ALMOST DAILY ISSUING DIRECTIVES ON FP AND HAS INDICATED THAT "THOSE WHO OBSTRUCT OR OPPOSE THE FP PROGRAM WOULD HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTION." WE UNDERSTAND FROM LOCAL MEDICAL DOCTORS THAT THEY ARE SDISGUSTED WITH THESE "INCREDIBLE ACTIONS" BY THE DELHI ADMINISTRARION AND MANY HAVE REFUSED TOBECOME INVOLVED AT ALL IN THE STERILIZATION PROGRAM, AND PARTICULARLY TO SERVE IN ANY OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED FP CAMPS THAT HAVE BEEN

CALLED "BUTCHER SHOPS". THIS REACTION HAS BROUGHT ON
THREATS AND RECRIMINATIONS FROM THE DELHI GOVERNMENT BUT
THESE DOCTORS HAVE DRAWN A LINE BETWEEN VOLUNTARY
AND COMPULSORY AND WANT NO PART OF A COMPLUSORY PROGRAM.
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